2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

The negative reactions of the peasants to conscription stem from a number of causes. Many recalled the hateful system of forced recruiting which had existed under the Díaz regime and feared that this system was now being reinstituted. Parents were distrustful of the care and food their sons would receive in the army and worried about their fate among strangers in the hostile outside world. Also, the absence of an eighteen-year-old son for a year often meant a serious economic loss to the family. Tepoztecans do not identify national problems of defense or internal order with their own interests, and they resent having to fight other people's (i.e., Mexicans') battles. Local feeling against conscription reached its climax when it was rumored that the young men were being prepared to fight against the Germans at the orders of the United States. This rumor was spread throughout Mexico by the Sinarquistas.

JUSTICE AND THE DEPARTAMENTO DE GOBERNACIÓN

There are very few occasions when local court cases reach the federal courts. However, federal intervention was sought during the hectic political campaigns of the twenties, when Tepoztecans who were imprisoned for political reasons appealed for federal injunctions to get them free. More recently a boundary conflict between Tepoztlán and Tejalpa reached the Federal Supreme Court, and Tepoztecans have sent many delegations to visit the justices of this court to explain their case.

Another federal department with which Tepoztecans have had some contact is *Gobernación* which is responsible for preserving public order throughout Mexico and for the smooth functioning of political campaigns and elections.

As we have seen, the attitude of Tepoztecans toward most federal agencies is a negative one. The outstanding exception is the school, which was built with federal funds and which is appreciated by the populace. The fact is that Tepoztecans might obtain more aid from federal agencies if they sought it out. However, the attitude of suspicion and self-sufficiency of the older generation militates against this. Now that the younger generation is beginning to take over positions of power, the situation may change. Angel Bocanegra, president of the municipio, is a good example of this. Bocanegra did not hesitate to go to Mexico City and visit the various federal departments soliciting aid for the village. In preparing for the celebration of the national holidays in 1949, Bocanegra borrowed an electric generator from one agency to provide electricity for the occasion, a movie projector from another agency, and from still another agency he received the promise of help in improving the quality of the local water supply.

Dealings of Tepoztecans with the administrative apparatus of the state government are quite frequent and are facilitated by the proximity of Cuernavaca. The governor of the state is an important figure to Tepoztecans. It would be difficult to find Tepoztecans who do not know the name of the present governor, and many can recall at least a few past governors. Indeed, some even remember the names of some of the governors of the Díaz epoch. The governor is thought of as "almost the president." However, the fact that they have seen the governor more

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

[1939-1940]

During this administration there were some efforts to complete the highway between Tepoztlán and Yautepec. After many attempts the administration succeeded in getting the state government to send a few men to work. They completed a small stretch of road. At the end of the administration, the municipal president began to work in politics, with the aim of leaving some friend or relative of his as his successor. He even began to inform the towns in the township of the official slate, and he was quite involved because he was leaving his stepfather as the future attorney general. This slate was victorious, as may be easily understood, since there was no opposition candidate. The municipal president organized a dance for the installation, as a symbol of his satisfaction with his administrative effort, although almost nothing was done during his term, except the paving of a few streets.

175 646 661

ADMINISTRATION OF 1941–42

On the eighth of December, 1940, the victory was won by the only candidate for the municipal presidency, with the other councillors whose names were as follows: President, Fulgencio Campos; Attorney General, Saturnino Córdova; and Comptroller, Fortino Lara. To complete the installation, a lively dance was organized in the market place at eight in the evening on December thirty-first, and at ten the following morning the transferring of the municipal powers was accomplished. Shortly after the installation the municipal president called together all the councillors and employees of the township, and when they were all together he spoke to them, pointing out the errors that the previous council had committed, with relation to the frequent drinking sprees of the municipal president and all the employees. He proposed that if any one of them wanted to take a few drinks, he should ask permission the day before, so that his place might be taken by someone else. In this way, it would at least be known that an employee was not staying away because he had some other job to do. All the employees and councillors accepted the proposal.

175 646 663

The council began to work and make efforts for the introduction of electrical power into the town,[20] making trips to Mexico City to interview the chiefs of the Secretariat of National Economy. Engineers were sent to the town to make studies to be submitted for the consideration of the high chiefs of this secretariat. A few months after the installation of the municipal president, his aspirations for improvements in the town fell to earth. Before becoming president, Fulgencio Campos had many illusions about the council having plenty of funds which might be used to improve the economic situation of the inhabitants. He soon lost heart, seeing that the municipal treasury was not receiving the money that he had imagined it would. He had also been saying that the previous presidents had done nothing for their people because they did not want to, and that they became presidents in order to get drunk and to commit misdemeanors.

[377]

Saturnino Córdova was functioning as attorney general and under-secretary of the Ministerio Público, and he was not at all qualified, for he could hardly sign his name. The municipal president proposed that it would be preferable that Córdova might better occupy the post of comptroller, changing with Fortino Lara so that the latter might become attorney general. Córdova was not opposed to this and in an act of council the change of commissions was recorded.

This council had many difficulties with the Commissariat of the Ejidos, because the

[624]

[20] In 1947, the date of my last visit to the village, Tepoztlán still had no electricity.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

[1941-1942]

175 646 663 [624] [652] latter had control of the forests. The municipal president maintained that the commissariat should not have authority in matters of forestry. There was a certain amount of hatred between them, though not declared. The council was seeking funds to meet the outstanding expenses which were incurred within the municipal administration. Seeing that there were no sources of revenue, the council voted to call together on a certain day all the charcoal makers and to ask them for their cooperation; that is, that they should give one day's work to cut down trees and cut them into logs, so that they might make charcoal kilns for the benefit of the council, and that the profits from those kilns would go into the municipal treasury.

All agreed to accept and to meet on the appointed day in the appointed place to cut the trees. The charcoal makers only cut about ten trees, which yielded little money for the council's purposes. There was nothing to do about it but give in, because only enough [652] money came of it to pay the person who watched over the furnace when it was burning. The municipal president despaired more than ever, because he saw that the money coming into the municipal treasury was barely enough to pay the few miserable salaries of the township employees. Not even the police could afford three men to keep watch over the peace.

The municipal president did not give up. He wanted to follow faithfully what he had promised. He began to work to improve the public market, soliciting federal aid. When it came to the ears of the dwellers in the town that there was a question of building the market, some of them immediately went to the municipal president's office; they made it clear that if such a market were to be completed, their properties in that vicinity must be respected. The municipal president demanded documentation to substantiate the true ownership of the small pieces of land which were within the property belonging to the township. Most of them presented their documents, and they reached a settlement that it would be preferable to pick the property by lot, in agreement with the owners. And, together with the council, they would finish the rooms which would be used for trade. As was said before, all this reached the stage of study but nothing more was ever done.

About the month of August of the second year of his administration, Fulgencio Campos admitted that he was failing in his intention to bring about some improvement [367] for the town. He decided to play his last card and pave the public gardens. This time he [653] interviewed not the civil authorities but the military. It happened at the time that federal workers were within the township breaking stone for the highway. Campos interviewed the chief of the military zone and set forth all the reasons for his aspirations and his desire to leave some work for his people. The military chief agreed that a few of the trucks which were being used to carry stone for the highway should be left at the municipal president's office so that they might be utilized in the paving of the public gardens. The trucks arrived right away, and the council tried to raise funds to pay for the sand and cement. The council agreed that the work should be completed after the end of the rainy season, that is, about the month of October, so that the rains would not slow up the work of the paving.

The day of the national celebrations, that is, the sixteenth of September, the comptroller, Saturnino Córdova, who was commissioned to list the animals at the slaughter- 175 646 house, got drunk with some friends. Most of his acquaintances were men in the meat 682 business.

On the seventeenth it was learned that Córdova had disappeared and could not be found anywhere. About five in the afternoon a woman reported a corpse in a ravine near

2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

[1941-1942]

the municipal slaughterhouse. The authorities took the corpse to the Town Hall for identification, because birds of prey had already mutilated the face and part of the body. The investigations began, and finally it was known that Córdova had been murdered inside the slaughterhouse and his body thrown into the ravine. 175 646 682

At that time there was also an investigation going on in the office of the under secretary of the Ministerio Público for cattle stealing. It was discovered that the lost animals had been slaughtered in the municipal slaughterhouse, and that the animals had been stolen by the same persons who had murdered Córdova because he was trying to discover the thieves. The council aided Córdova's family with burial and what was necessary to settle a few other expenses. The council proceeded to call the alternate for the comptroller's office, to take charge of the post which Córdova had been filling. [685]

In a short time the cement necessary for the paving of the public gardens was bought. Only half of the job could be done, and this only with the councillors giving a part of their pay. An additional sum of fifty pesos, which had been given by a woman toward the pipe line for drinking water, also went into the paving of the public gardens and the fixing of benches. The president, on leaving his post, got into a suit over this fifty pesos; the people said he had stolen it. 175 646 663

ADMINISTRATION OF 1943–44

On the first of January, 1943, the only candidates who had taken part in the elections of the first Sunday in December were inaugurated: Municipal President, Emilio Martínez; Comptroller, Benito Vargas; and Attorney General, Carlos Quiroz. In the first council meeting they decided to increase the taxes of the township for the purpose of town improvements. All those who take office as presidents are always eager to improve their town. The council in agreement with the Commissariat of the Ejidos, who had some funds for the development of the forests, took those funds and bought the necessary cement and sand to finish the paving of the public gardens. And the work was finished in a few weeks. [666] [652] [367] [653]

There came a fiesta at which people drank too much, and as this municipal president, Emilio Martínez, had many friends, who were constantly inviting him to have a drink, he drank all that day. When evening came and it was getting dark, he was completely drunk. Upon getting into the bus he met another man who was also far gone, and they started a commotion. They went from words to blows and from blows to kicks. When Martínez saw the other man stretched out, he began to kick him until his relatives and the police intervened. Of course, the man was taken to jail, and although he had received the blows from Martínez, he was fined five pesos. 175 646 661

Martínez had a son who was completing his military service. In a short time stories began to circulate to the effect that young Mexican men were going to be sent to war, which was then at its height. Undoubtedly they hinted this to Martínez. According to the story they tell, he organized a band of bad fellows, and on the Sunday when his son was en route to the barracks this band attacked the vehicle in which he was riding. Martínez claimed that his son had been kidnapped by bandits, but the matter did not end there. The state governor gave orders to the chief of the judicial police, and one day when Martínez was in the city he was apprehended and taken to the state penitentiary at the disposition of the governor of the state. As soon as the other members of the council learned that Martínez was being held in prison, they called the comptroller, as was provided in the law, to take the office of municipal president for seventy days. The comp